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BRIEF NOTES ON THE WAS.

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THESE notes are of the briefest character, being little more than headings of the chief points required for information.

The authorities on the Wa country are—

- Mr. J. G. Scott, C.I.E. ... Reports dated 1892-93, 1896-97, and the *Asiatic Quarterly Review* for January 1896.
- Captain H. Daly, C.I.E. ... Report dated 1890-91.
- Captain G. V. Burrows, M.I. Report dated 1890-91 for the Intelligence Department.
- Lieutenant C. Ainslie, R.E. Report dated 1892-93 for the Intelligence Department.
- Lieutenant C. Macquoid,
D.S.O., Hyderabad Lan- Report dated 1895-96 for the Intelligence De-
cers. partment.
- Major G. H. H. Couchman, Report dated 1896-97 for the Intelligence De-
D.S.O., Som. L. I. partment.

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BRIEF NOTES ON THE WAS.

THE Wa country lies between East latitudes $22^{\circ} 15'$ and $23^{\circ} 30'$, and is bounded on the west by the Salween, on the east by the proposed Anglo-Chinese frontier as represented by the Kông Ming Shan range, on the south by the valley of the Namma, while the Nam Hting river, which flows into the Salween just below the village of Kunlon, defines its northern limits.

Its area is approximately 5,000 miles. Of this area, the northern portion,

* See map attached.

i.e., that round lake Nawng Hkeo,* still remains *terra incognita* and the inhabitants thereof are said to be still more uncivilized than those in the south. The country has been explored to within ten miles or so of the lake on the south and west; on the east and north it is unknown up to the frontier. On the Mông Hka Shan (the ridge on which Nawng Hkeo is) there are numerous Lahu (Mu-Hsô) villages under the Tafuyè of Mông Hka, who was friendly, but has transferred his allegiance to the Chinese, probably because he had no option.

Geographically speaking the Wa country consists of a mass of hills composed of (a) high lengthy ridges and their numerous spurs and underfeatures emanating from the Kông Ming Shan (the Mèkong-Salween watershed), and (b) three ranges of hills running approximately north and south, forming minor watersheds between the Kông Ming Shan and the Salween.

The principal watercourses are those of (a) the Namkha, which has a double source in lake Nawng Hkeo and the Kông Ming Shan, and discharges into the Salween in North latitude $21^{\circ} 30'$, East longitude $98^{\circ} 40'$, after a course of about 130 miles. It has many fair-sized tributaries, which flow into it through deep narrow gorges from east and west.

(b) The Namma, which, rising near Matet, flows south, then bends north and empties itself into the Salween river at the ferry Hsai Leng or Mông Nawng, and, curiously enough, opposite to another Namma which here flows in on the right bank of the Salween.

Exclusive of the unknown area round Nawng Hkeo the Wa country consists of the following little States (*vide* map attached) :—

<i>State.</i>	<i>Chief.</i>
(1) East Manglun	... Ton Hsang.
(2) The Gold Tract	... Nil (8 circles).
(3) Loi Lôn Naw Kham U.
(4) Ngek Hting ...	} The Chief of Ngek Lek.
(5) Sung Long ...	
(6) Ngek Lek ...	
(7) Motlè ...	
(8) Mothai Feudatory to East Manglun.
(9) Sôn Mu Pang Kwan.
(10) Kang Hsü Sè (Kang Hsen)
(11) Hsung Ramang

and other village communities to the north.

Of these, Manglun, the Gold Tracts, and Mothai are friendly; the rest more or less hostile. The Wa States are all thickly populated, the Gold Tracts especially so, and it is estimated that they can put 20,000 men in the field, indifferently armed, however, and lacking courage.

A note on Wa warfare will be found in Major Couchman's Report, 1896, page 71.

Concerning their habits and customs Mr. J. G. Scott has written an interesting article in the *Asiatic Quarterly Review* for January 1896.

Until recently the Wa country possessed a great reputation for mineral wealth, especially gold, which led from time to time to attempted prospecting from both Burmese and Chinese. Such enterprises failed, usually with loss of life to those who undertook them. Unless the country fulfils its reputation, con-

cerning which there has now begun to exist some doubt, the country is valueless commercially or strategically.

With the exception of Manglun, which pays a small annual tribute to us, the Wa States have not been brought under administration. They were first visited after the annexation in 1890-91. In that year Lieutenant Daly, Superintendent, Northern Shan States, entered from the south and passed through the Central States north-west to the Panthay settlement of Panglon in the Sôn Mu Suma State, to whose *Chief* the Panthays pay an annual tribute for the right of living in Panglon.

Though no active hostilities occurred, his reception was by no means friendly, a collision with the Was only being prevented by the intervention of the Panthay mule-drivers who accompanied Lieutenant Daly.

Since then the Wa States have been visited three times, namely, (1) by Mr. Scott in 1892-93, (2) by Captain Elliott in 1895-96, and (3) again by Mr. Scott in 1896-97.

Mr. Scott's tour in 1892-93 struck wider eastwards, reaching the hitherto unvisited Mông Hka, the expedition throughout being peaceful.

In 1895-96 Captain Elliott was deputed to visit the supposed Anglo-Chinese frontier, *i.e.*, the Kông Ming Shan, to investigate reported encroachments on the part of the Chinese and effect a settlement between Tong Hsang, the chief of East Manglun, and the *Chiefs* of certain of the Northern Wa States.

The frontier (the Kông Ming Shan) was not visited, and Captain Elliott's efforts to effect a settlement resulted in hostilities on the part of the Was. There were several casualties on the side of the British, who destroyed Matet, one of the principal villages of the Motlè State, as well as several others.

Mr. Scott's expedition in 1896-97, undertaken to visit the frontier with the same object as the preceding year, traversed the Central States and reached Mông Hsaw, a still further eastern point, a narrow but fertile valley inhabited exclusively by *Shans*. It was then discovered that the Chinese had encroached on Wa and therefore on British territory, and that they had established posts within it. So far as is known Mông Hsaw is completely in Chinese hands. North of it, on the western slope of the Kông Ming Shan and in territory to which they have no claim whatever, the Chinese have for three or four years been working very productive silver-mines.

Instigated by Naw Kham U, the *Chief* of Loi Lôn, who is well disposed towards the Chinese, the Was opposed the movements of the expedition, and several days' hostilities resulted in a loss to Mr. Scott's column of 21 men killed and wounded, and the burning of several Wa villages, the Was maintaining their defiant attitude as long as the expedition remained in their territory.

It is pretty certain that until they have been taught a lesson, the Was will be hostile to any British exploration.

The policy of letting them severely alone would appear inadvisable from the fact that the majority of the Wa States favour the Chinese, and should the delimitation of the Anglo-Chinese Boundary in those parts be deferred, and the Was be not taught that they are British subjects, Chinese encroachments may become so extensive as to prove formidable in the political disagreements they may give rise to between England and China.

On the other hand, no British Commission could delimit the boundary along the Kông Ming Shan with a number of hostile States between them and the Salween.

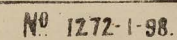
If, therefore, the Boundary Commission be resumed next cold season, it would appear reasonable policy to direct punitive operations against the Was at the very commencement of the season, reduce them to submission, or at all events harmlessness, and hold their country till the arrival from the south of the Boundary Commission, which could then pass rapidly northwards without hindrance on its duties of delimitation.

As soon as the Commission was clear of the Wa States half the troops operating could either be withdrawn or continue the task of complete subjugation; the other half might be added to the escort of the Boundary Commission as reinforcement when working along the Môngkho-Môngkha border, where it is possible there may be trouble with the Kachius.

In this office "Notes on probable Military Operations in the Wa Country" the number of troops put down as being required is 675 rifles and six guns, working in three separate columns. The probable strength of the Boundary Commission escort will be 400 rifles and two guns. The expense of sending up 275 more men and four more guns would not be very great, while their presence in the Wa States during the delimitation of the boundary would effectually guard against any possible mishap to the Commission and would save a subsequent punitive expedition of the whole strength as above mentioned. Two birds, in fact, would be killed with one stone.

RANGOON : }
The 6th June 1898. }

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THE POLICE OF BURMA